

Message Text

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12

ACTION EA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5034

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

USUN NEWYORK 1354

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 11397

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, TH

SUBJECT: THAI REACTIONS TO GKR STATEMENT ON NEGOTIATION AND
VIEWS ON KHMER CREDENTIALS FIGHT IN UNGA

REF: A. STATE 146577; B. PHNOM PENH 9131; C. STATE 150312;
D. FBIS D120038Z JULY 74; E. STATE 129536; F. BANGKOK 10281

1. SUMMARY: WE HAVE DISCUSSED THE GKR STATEMENT ON NEGOTIATIONS AND THE KHMER CREDENTIALS FIGHT IN THE UNGA WITH MFA OFFICIALS DURING RECENT DAYS. THEY ARE PLEASE WITH THE PEACE INITIATIVE BUT REMAIN PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE CREDENTIALS BATTLE. FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN SAID HE WAS CONCERNED THAT THE EMERGENCE OF KHIEU SAMPHAN WOULD HELP GRUNK. OTHER THAI OFFICIALS WERE ALSO GLOOMY ABOUT GKR PROSPECTS BUT SAID THE RTG WILL SEEK A UNITED ASEAN STAND SUPPORTING THE GKR IN
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THE UNGA. THERE WAS CONSENSUS THAT THE GKR MUST CARRY THE

FIGHT, ESPECIALLY WITH THOSE COUNTRIES THAT ABSTAINED LAST YEAR. DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER CHATCHAI MENTIONED THAT THAILAND HAS OFFERED TO ASSIST IN NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE OPPOSING KHMER SIDES. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING THE AMBASSADOR'S JULY 12 MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN ITSARANGKUN NA AYUTTHAYA, THE FOREIGN MINISTER INQUIRED ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR THE GKR OFFER OF NEGOTIATIONS AND THE KHMER CREDENTIALS FIGHT. THE AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED OUR HOPE THAT NEGOTIATIONS WILL OCCUR, AND THAT WE CAN HOLD THE LINE AGAINST THE MOVE TO UNSEAT THE GKR IN THE UNGA.

CHARUNPHAN SAID HE IS WORRIED THAT THE EMERGENCE OF KHIEU SAMPHAN AS A LEADER WILL HELP GRUNK IN THE CREDENTIALS FIGHT. CHARUNPHAN MENTIONED THAT HE HAD ADVISED THE GKR OF THE NEED TO PERSUADE ALL THOSE GOVERNMENTS WHO ABSTAINED LAST YEAR. HE SAID THE GKR COULD USE ITS ASSETS MORE EFFECTIVELY.

3. THE AMBASSADOR ENCOURAGED THE THAIS TO ADVISE AND ASSIST THE GKR, SAYING THIS WAS MORE EFFECTIVE THAN OUR TAKING THE LEAD. HE ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT THE GKR POSITION IS MUCH STRONGER MILITARILY, AND LEFT WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER A REPORT ON THE CURRENT CAMBODIAN SITUATION THAT HAD BEEN PREPARED FOR THIS PURPOSE. THE FOREIGN MINISTER STATED THAT IN THE THAI ASSESSMENT ALSO THE GKR WAS STRONGER, BUT HE DID NOT THINK THAT WOULD HAVE MUCH INFLUENCE ON MOST NATIONS, SPECIFICALLY MENTIONING THOSE OF AFRICA AND LATIN AMERICA.

4. THE AMBASSADOR URGED A CONCERTED EFFORT DURING THE MONTHS REMAINING TO GET THE WORD OUT THAT THE GKR HAS DEMONSTRATED IT CANNOT BE DEFEATED, IS IN A RELATIVELY STRONGER POSITION, AND THAT KHMER PEOPLE, WHO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY, CHOOSE TO FLEE TO GKR TERRITORY. THE FOREIGN MINISTER ACKNOWLEDGED THAI WILLINGNESS TO WORK TO THIS END, BUT THE AIR OF PESSIMISM AMONG THE THAIS WAS OBVIOUS.

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5. DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER CHATCHAI WHO WAS IN THE MEETING WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER, SAID THE RTG HAD OFFERED ITS GOOD OFFICES TO ALL SIDES IN THE KHMER CONFLICT AND PROPOSED TALKS IN BANGKOK. CHARUNPHAN SUGGESTED THAT TALKS MIGHT OCCUR AT THE UN. AMBASSADOR ANAN PANYARACHUN, WHO WAS ALSO PRESENT, COMMENTED THAT TALKS WILL BE DIFFICULT SINCE BOTH SIDES REALIZE THAT THEY MAY LOSE SOMETHING FROM NEGOTIATIONS.

6. KOSON SINTHAWANON, DEPUTY CHIEF, MFA POLITICAL DEPARTMENT, TOLD EMBOFF JULY 11 HE FOUND LON NOL INITIATIVE VERY USEFUL WITH RESPECT TO CREDENTIALS FIGHT IN UNGA. HE SAID THE MFA FEARS THE GKR WILL LOSE ITS UNGA SEAT BUT IS DETERMINED TO "SINK GRACEFULLY WITH THE GKR SHIP AS IT GOES DOWN." HE INDICATED THAT MFA IS PRIVATELY SUPPORTING LATEST GKR NEGOTIATIONS STAND WITH OTHER ASEAN MEMBERS. "THE NATION" OF JULY 12 REPORTS THAT THE RTG IS SOUNDING OUT ASEAN MEMBERS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF ADOPTING A COMMON STAND IN SUPPORT OF THE GKR (REF D). THE THAI DELEGATION TO FORTHCOMING ASEAN MEETING IN KUALA LUMPUR, WHICH KOSON WILL HEAD, INTENDS TO RAISE THE PROSPECTS OF AN ASEAN STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE LON NOL OFFER, BUT KOSON WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THIS SUCCEEDING.

7. AMBASSADOR ANAN PANYARACHUN, WHO AS WELL AS BEING AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S. IS THE THAI PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UN, WAS SIMILARLY PESSIMISTIC IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH THE AMBASSADOR ON JULY 11. AMBASSADOR KINTNER COMPLIMENTED HIM ON THE EXCELLENT ROLE HE HAD PLAYED LAST YEAR IN THE CREDENTIALS FIGHT, BUT ANAN INSISTED THE PROBLEM WOULD BE TOUGHER THIS YEAR. ANAN CONTENDED THAT THE KHMER THEMSELVES MUST ENLIST SUPPORT FOR THEIR POSITION, ESPECIALLY AMONG NON-ASEAN STATES. HE AT THE SAME TIME MADE A STRONG PLEA FOR THE UNITED STATES TO CONTINUE AND IF POSSIBLE, INCREASE ITS MATERIAL SUPPORT FOR THE GKR.

8. AMBASSADOR ANAN MENTIONED HIS EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE THE GHANIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE UN AND HIS HOPES TO CONVINCE HIM THAT GHANA SHOULD ABSTAIN DESPITE ITS RECOGNITION OF GRUNK. HE INDICATED THE GHANIAN AMBASSADOR IS PERSONALLY CONFIDENTIAL

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IN DISAGREEMENT WITH HIS GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT OF GRUNK. ANAN STATED HE THINKS THE BEST TACTIC IS TO CONVINCE GOVERNMENTS THAT HAVE RECOGNIZED THE GRUNK TO ABSTAIN. HE SAID HE WILL BE MEETING AGAIN IN AUGUST WITH THE AMBASSADOR OF GHANA, WHO PROMISED HIM ALSO TO CONSIDER WAYS TO INFLUENCE OTHER AFRICAN NATIONS.

9. ANAN PROPOSED THAT WE URGE THE GKR TO BE MORE ACTIVE IN COUNTRIES WHERE THE VOTES COUNT, RATHER THAN REPEATING THEIR ARGUMENTS TO GOVERNMENTS LIKE THE RTG WHOSE SUPPORT IS ALREADY SURE. HE THOUGHT THE ASEAN COUNTRIES WOULD BE "FAIRLY STRONG" IN SUPPORT: HE CHARACTERIZED THE MALAYSIAN POSITION AS UNCHANGED REGARDLESS OF THEIR RECOGNITION OF THE PRC, THE INDONESIANS AS "JITTERY," AND REQUIRING MORAL SUPPORT, AND SINGAPORE AS MORE SOLID

THAN LAST YEAR. THE JAPANESE ARE CONCERNED, AND ANAN THINKS THEY HAVE TALKED WITH THE PRC. ANAN CLAIMED CREDIT FOR HAVING PERSUADED NORWAY TO CHANGE ITS VOTES LAST YEAR AT THE LAST MOMENT, BRINGING ICELAND ALONG AND PROVIDING A CRUCIAL SWITCH; HE VIEWS THE SCANDINAVIAN VOTE AS VERY DOUBTFUL THIS YEAR. THE MFA PLANNING CHIEF, ASA SARASIN, INTERJECTED THAT THE UNITED STATES SHOULD TALK DIRECT WITH THE PRC ON THIS ISSUE, AND THAT IF CONTACTS COULD BE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN KHIEU SAMPHAN AND THE GKR PRIOR TO THE UNGA VOTE, IT WOULD PROVIDE A PERSUASIVE ARGUMENT TO POSTPONE THE DECISION AGAIN.

10. LOCAL PRESS REACTION TO GKR INITIATIVE WAS INITIALLY LIMITED LARGELY TO ENGLISH PRESS, AS LAST WEEK'S RIOTS CONTINUED TO COMPETE SUCCESSFULLY FOR ATTENTION. THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE "BANGKOK POST" GAVE FRONT PAGE COVERAGE TO GKR STATEMENT, BUT THIS WAS SUBSEQUENTLY VITIATED BY THE "POST'S" SISTER JOURNAL, "WORLD", WHICH HIGHLIGHTED NEWS OF SIHANOUK'S REJECTION. A "POST" EDITORIAL OF 10 JULY OPINED THAT NOTHING WOULD COME OF LON NOL'S OFFER BUT THAT IT WOULD HELP BRING HOME THE TRUTH ABOUT THE STALEMATE WHICH EXISTS ON THE CAMBODIAN BATTLEFIELD. THE EDITORIAL PROPOSED THAT LON NOL GO FURTHER IN HIS DESIRE TO PURSUE PEACE BY OFFERING SPECIFIC WAYS BY WHICH THIS COULD BE ACHIEVED, INCLUDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MODIFIED COALITION GOVERNMENT.

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